

REMARKS

Claims 1-2 are pending in this application. Claims 3-10 have been added.

The Office Action dated January 13, 2005, has been received and carefully reviewed. In that Office Action, claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

Claim 1 as amended requires that, of the digital signals of images obtained by image pickup devices for detecting focusing status, only digital signals corresponding to pixels within a predetermined focus area are extracted so that the focusing status is detected within a frame range smaller than the entire frame range of the image to be outputted. Yamamoto does not show or suggest extracting digital signals as now required by claim 1, and claim 1 and its dependent claims 3 and 4 are submitted to be allowable over Yamamoto for at least this reason.

Claim 2 as amended also requires that, of the digital signals of images obtained by image pickup devices for detecting focusing status, only digital signals corresponding to pixels within a predetermined focus area are extracted so that the focusing status is detected within a frame range smaller than the entire frame range of the image to be outputted. This limitation is not shown or suggested by Yamamoto, and claim 2 is submitted to be allowable

for at least this reason. Claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 2 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 2.

New claim 7 is also submitted to be allowable. Claim 7 requires a plurality of second image pickup devices for detecting focusing status by detecting a two-dimensional image. Claim 7 further requires that the number of pixels of the second image pickup devices be smaller than the number of pixels of a first image pickup device for image output. Yamamoto does not show or suggest two-dimensional image sensors having a smaller number of pixels than a first image sensor as required by claim 7, and claim 7 is submitted to be allowable for at least this reason. Claims 8-10 depend from claim 7 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 7.

Each issue raised in the Office Action dated January 13, 2005, has been addressed, and claims 1-10 are submitted to be in condition for allowance. Wherefore, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 2, and examination and allowance of claims 3-10 is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Scott Wakeman (Reg. No. 37,750) at the

telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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